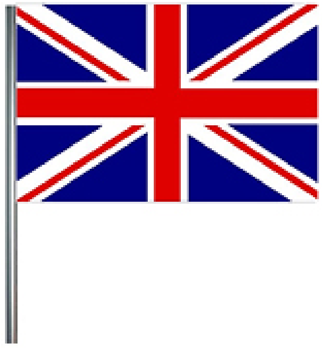
Theoretical Backup Three
for the Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*:
Volume Fifty-Seven



C. K. Ogden

The only professional British linguist who succeeded to provide a recording of the voice of James Joyce, and the very first translator of Ludwig Wittgenstein into English.

Basic English

Edited by
C. George Sandulescu

Recommended Reading:

C. K. Ogden: *The Meaning of Meaning*
C. K. Ogden: *Opposition*
C. K. Ogden: *Basic English*

Contemporary Literature Press
http://editura.mttlc.ro

Bucureşti 2013







This "theoretical insert",

Volume 55, Volume 56, and Volume 57,

is dedicated to

Professor CARLA MARENGO—

a most remarkable teacher of English Literature,

and thorough researcher of Joyce.

Monte Carlo, Noël 2013

George Sandulescu







The Turin Shroud

Theoretical Backup for the Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*

Edited by **C. George Sandulescu**

Charles Ogden (1889-1957) was a linguist and a language philosopher: to him the word was as real as any other object in his hands. He demonstrated this by recording the very voice of James Joyce himself. The reading was made in August 1929 at King's College, London. By mentioning the year of that recording, we inevitably notice that the first quarter of the twentieth century grouped together quite a number of remarkable events. 1. The phonograph had been invented before 1900. 2. Tom Stoppard, in his play *Travesties*, describes how, in 1917, in Zurich, Joyce, Tzara, and Lenin sat not far one from the other in the very same room. 3. The BBC came into being in 1922. 4. During the same year, Ogden published his own translation into English of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which had been written in German the year before. 5. The same year, 1922, saw the publication of Joyce's *Ulysses* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Whether Joyce had read Wittgenstein is the great question that nobody can answer. 6. Ogden's own *The Meaning of Meaning* was published in 1923: it made the relationship between sound and meaning the essence of Modernism. 7. In the 1930's,

Charles Ogden (1889-1957) este cunoscut ca lingvist şi filosof al limbajului: cuvântul, pentru el, era o realitate concretă. Acest lucru l-a demonstrat atunci când a înregistrat pe disc vocea lui James Joyce însuşi. Înregistrarea a fost făcută în august 1929 la King's College, Londra. Tot în primul sfert al secolului XX s-au mai petrecut o sumă de evenimente importante. 1. Înainte chiar de anul 1900 s-a inventat fonograful. 2. Tom Stoppard îşi construieşte piesa *Travesties* pe ideea că, în 1917 la Zürich, Joyce, Tzara şi Lenin s-au aflat împreună în aceeaşi încăpere. 3. În anul 1922 a luat ființă BBC. 4. În cursul aceluiaşi an Ogden a tradus în limba engleză *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, pe care Wittgenstein îl publicase în germană cu un an înainte. 5. Tot în anul 1922 au apărut *Ulysses* de Joyce şi *The Waste Land* de Eliot. Rămâne fără răspuns pentru moment întrebarea dacă Joyce l-a citit ori nu pe Wittgenstein. 6. Ogden a publicat *The Meaning of Meaning* în 1923, carte care anunța că esența Modernismului era relația dintre sunet şi sens. 7. În jurul anului 1930, Ogden mai publică două volume importante: *Opposition* şi *Basic English*. John Lyons, autor de manuale,

Ogden published two other major books, *Opposition*, and *Basic English*. The textbook-writer John Lyons considered Ogden's *Opposition* to be one of the best discussions on the subject.

The reason we are publishing Ogden's books now, as a theoretical backup for James Joyce Lexicography, has something to do with the fact that there is a close relationship between Ogden's two major achievements. One achievement was that he made publicly known the recording of Joyce reading a fragment of the book he was writing in 40 languages at once. Ogden's second great achievement was Basic English: he believed that English could be, and was, in fact, the key to the one and only international language. Ogden's ideas of Meaning, Opposition and Basic English seem to lead straight into Joyce's own thoughts constantly hovering in his mind during the 17 years while he was writing *Finnegans Wake*.

Quite remarkable is the fact that Alexandru Graur, member of the so-called Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania, wrote a book in which he described Basic English not only as an "imperialist" act, but also as the most "reprehensible attempt".

Ogden' three books, now grouped under the heading **Theoretical Backup**, posit major questions for Joyce researchers: **What made the British linguist Charles Ogden record James Joyce reading from a book far from being finished at**

considera *Opposition* a fi una dintre cele mai bune discuții pe această temă.

Rațiunea pentru care publicăm în acest moment cărțile lui Ogden, ca fundament teoretic al seriei lexicografice Joyce, este aceea că Ogden a realizat două lucruri importante, care sunt strâns legate între ele. Primul este că a făcut cunoscută lumii vocea lui Joyce citind un fragment dintr-o carte în care se exprima în 40 de limbi străine diferite în acelaşi timp. Al doilea este *Basic English*: Ogden era încredințat că limba engleză este singurul drum către o limbă unică internațională. Ideile lui privind sensul, opoziția şi *Basic English* duc drept la gândurile care trebuie că l-au obsedat pe Joyce în cei 17 ani cât a durat până ce a terminat de scris *Finnegans Wake.*

Nu este lipsit de interes faptul că Alexandru Graur, membru al aşa-zisei Academii a Republicii Socialiste România, a scris şi el o carte în care descria *Basic English* drept o "încercare imperialistă şi condamnabilă."

Grupate în secțiunea de fundamentare teoretică, cele trei volume de Ogden ridică o sumă de probleme esențiale pentru cerecetătorii operei lui Joyce: **Ce anume l-a făcut pe lingvistul britanic Charles Ogden să-l înregistreze pe James Joyce citind un fragment dintr-o carte pe care nici măcar n-o terminase încă? Ce intenție teoretică leagă oare volumele lui Ogden de înregistrarea vocii lui Joyce, singura înregistare, de altfel, a vocii lui Joyce până în ziua de azi? Şi,**

the time? What theoretical threads can possibly connect Ogden's major books to the recording of Joyce's voice, the only one of its kind to this day? And, last but not least: Why exactly did Joyce accept to be recorded?

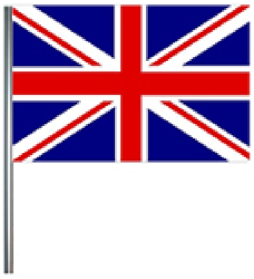
We, as the publishers of this series, do hope the diligent reader will certainly manage to find his own answers.

nu în ultimul rând, de ce oare a acceptat Joyce să fie înregistrat de Ogden?

Autorii acestei serii teoretice speră că cititorii atenți vor dezlega aceste enigme, fiecare în felul lui, desigur.

C. George Sandulescu & Lidia Vianu

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Volume Fifty-Seven



C. K. Ogden

The only professional British linguist who succeeded to provide a recording of the voice of James Joyce,
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Al Graur: Fondul principal al limbii române, Editura Ştiinţifică, Bucureşti, 1957, pp 110-111.
I. A. Richards: "Some Recollections of C. K. Ogden", in *Encounter*, September 1957, pp. 10-12.
John Lyons: *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics*, Cambridge University Press, 1968, p. 489. The best textbook at the time on theoretical linguistics available in Great Britain.

It is by coincidence rather than by special intention that we are reissuing *The Meaning of Meaning* at such a round and symbolic date.

N.B. This Lexicographic Series as a whole is primarily meant as **teaching material** for the larger half of Continental Europe, which, for practically three quarters of a century, was deprived of ready access to the experimental fiction and poetry of the world. All Western literary criticism was also banned. Hence, the imperative necessity of re-issuing a considerable amount of post-war discussions. **The Publisher.**

If you want to have all the information you need about ***Finnegans Wake*,** including the full text of *Finnegans Wake* line-numbered, go to the personal site **Sandulescu Online**, at the following internet address:
http://sandulescu.perso.monaco.mc/

Given the importance of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, all postgraduates in English, Romanian, French, and German work on this research project as part of their normal and regular academic assignments.
L V
Academic Director C L P

Theoretical Backup Three
for the Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*:

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Basic English

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Vol. **37.**	A Lexicon of **Selective Segmentation** of *Finnegans Wake* (The '*Syllabifications*'). FW Episode Two. http://editura.mttlc.ro/sandulescu-segmentation-of-fw.html	127 pp	9 September 2013
Vol. **38.**	A Lexicon of **Selective Segmentation** of *Finnegans Wake* (The '*Syllabifications*'). FW Episode Three. http://editura.mttlc.ro/sandulescu-segmentation-of-fw.html	193 pp	9 September 2013
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You are kindly asked to address your comments, suggestions, and criticism to the Publisher: lidia.vianu@g.unibuc.ro

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Theoretical Backup Two for the Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*

Charles K. Ogden: *Basic English*

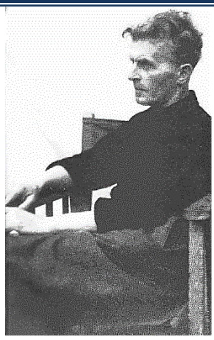
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C. George Sandulescu

Only Connect



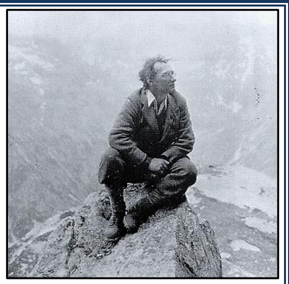
Charles Kay Ogden
(1889-1957)



Ludwig Wittgenstein
(1889-1951)

A stupid man's report of what a clever man says can never be accurate, because he unconsciously translates what he hears into something he can understand.

Bertrand Russell

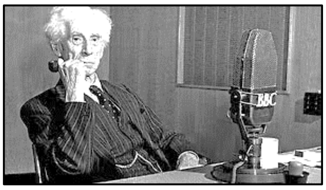


I. A. Richards (1893-1979)
visiting the Alps, 1930.



Alexandru Graur
(1900-1988)





Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

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"The following pages, some of which were written as long ago as 1910, have appeared for the most part in periodical form during 1920-22, and arise out of an attempt to deal directly with difficulties raised by the influence of Language upon Thought."

Charles K. Ogden

(Preface to the first edition. Magdalene College, Cambridge, January 1923.)

PREFACE

To the First Edition

The following pages, some of which were written as long ago as 1910, have appeared for the most part in periodical form during 1920-22, and arise out of an attempt to deal directly with difficulties raised by the influence of Language upon Thought.

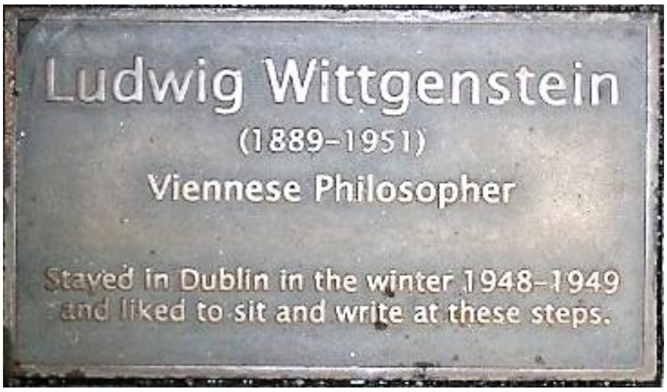
Charles K. Ogden: *Basic English*

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein	(1889-1951)	*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (**1921**), translated into English by Charles K. Ogden in 1922
Charles Kay Ogden	(1889-1957)	*The Meaning of Meaning* (**1923**)
James Joyce	(1882-1941)	*Finnegans Wake* (**1922-1939**)

The only recording of James Joyce reading a part of "Anna Livia Plurabelle", lasting eight andf a half minutes, was made by Charles K. Ogden in London, in August **1929**.

If Joyce knew a great British linguist personally and knew him well, that was Charles Ogden, who was actually the only professional British linguist who succeeded to provide a recording of the voice of James Joyce. Charles Ogden is the distinguished London linguist who recorded Joyce's voice, while being at the same time the very first to translate Ludwig Wittgenstein into English. If Joyce knew Ogden, he must have been acquainted with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.

The question "Did Joyce know Wittgenstein?" has an answer, then: Charles Ogden is the key to it.





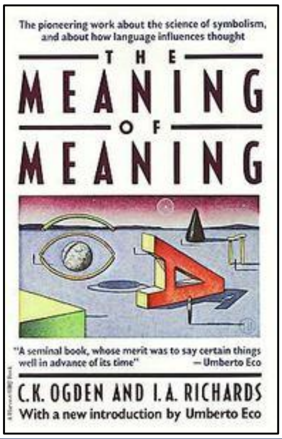




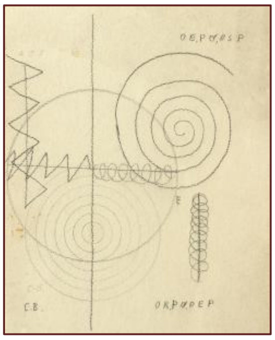
By a strange coincidence, this Ogden cover carries the Irish and Romanian flags intermingled!

The Irish flag vertical from the flagpole is green, white, and orange. The Romanian flag vertical from the flagpole is blue, yellow, and red. The Ogden cover is green, yellow, and red. Further coincidence, both countries are the only ones who use the French word tricolour most frequently to refer to their respective national flags! The way the British call their own flag the Union Jack.







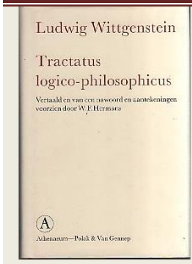


Joyce, in our opinion, has learnt more from his drinking sessions with the Romanian sculptor Constantin Brancusi, as well as from the very recent writings of Charles Ogden, than from all the famous works of writers like Marcel Proust, or Rabelais, the only exception, perhaps, being Lewis Carroll.

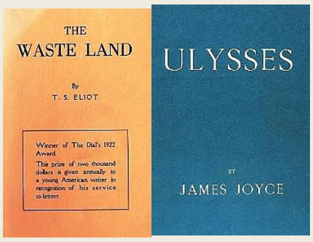
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Charles K. Ogden: *Basic English*

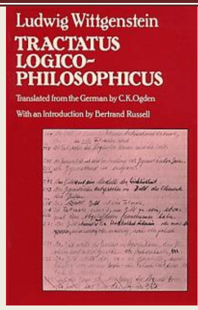
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1922



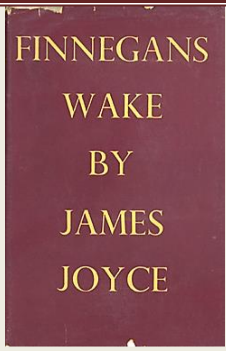
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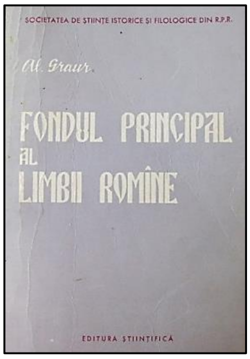


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1957



Alexandru Graur

În încercările lor desperate şi zadarnice de a impune întregii lumi limba engleză, imperialiştii anglo-americani au recurs în ultimul timp la o stratagemă puţin inteligentă, la o camuflare a limbii engleze. Aşa-zişi oameni de ştiinţă, la ordinele lor, au creat „limba” botezată *basic-English,* un fel de surogat de limbă engleză, o limbă engleză simplificată la maximum. Basic-English are numai 850 de cuvinte (în teorie, căci în practică, prin diferite trucuri, se mai adaugă cuvinte, cu miile), astfel încât cel care vrea s-o înveţe să nu aibă greutate prea mare. De curînd s-a luat iniţiativa inventării unui *basic-French.* Aceste încercări sînt sortite unui eşec sigur, căci ele caută să transforme engleza (şi franceza) într-un fel de

In its desperate and futile attempt to make English the language of the world, Anglo-American imperialism has lately decided to camouflage the English language, which is not a very bright thing to do. Some so-called scientists in its pay have created Basic English, which is a kind of surrogate English, a drastically simplified variety of English. Basic English only has 850 words in it, theoretically: in fact, by means of a number of tricks, thousands of words find their way in there. The idea behind all this is to prove that learning English is very easy. Basic French has now been concocted as well. These attempts are of course doomed to fail. They simply turn English and French into a collection of charades: when an

colecție de şarade: în locul termenilor exacți, care nu figurează în lexicul *basic*, noțiunile sînt redate prin perifraze teribil de lungi şi complicate şi, de altfel, inexacte în ce priveşte sensul. Desigur acesta nu este singurul cusur al limbilor *basic* şi încercarea însăşi este condamnabilă. Dar în prezenta lucrare mi s-a părut interesant să analizez felul cum creatorii acestei aşa-zise limbi au făcut alegerea cuvintelor pe care le-au acceptat în vocabularul redus.

Basic-English are 600 de substantive, 150 de adjective, 16 verbe, iar restul sînt instrumente gramaticale. Prin urmare „savanții" la ordinele imperialismului au luat calea exact contrară celei pe care merg limbile reale. Am constatat că în fondul principal capătă importanță tot mai mare verbele, în dauna substantivelor. Basic însă desființează aproape cu totul verbul, păstrînd numai 16 cuvinte din această categorie, pe care de fapt le transformă într-un fel de auxiliare, rămînînd ca ideea de acțiune să fie exprimată prin substantive, cam în felul în care am văzut că procedează limba turcă. Am arătat mai sus că acest procedeu înseamnă o alterare, o sărăcire a limbii. Prin urmare nu numai că limba engleză este intenționat degradată, adusă la nivelul unei limbi primitive cu vocabular sărac, dar nici măcar alegerea acelor cuvinte care au

exact term is not included in the basic list of words, it must be described by endless, complicated circumlocutions which are bound to betray the real meaning. There are more disadvantages to basic languages than this, and, on the whole, they are a reprehensible attempt. All I mean to do in this particular study, though, is just to examine the way in which those who created these so-called languages have decided which words go into their restricted list and which do not.

Basic English has about 600 nouns, 150 adjectives, 16 verbs, while the rest are grammatical tools. These would-be scientists that serve imperialism seem to have gone in the opposite direction taken by living languages. We cannot fail to notice that most of the words that make up the main lexical body of a language tend to be verbs, not nouns. There are almost no verbs in Basic English: just 16 words of that kind, which are actually a kind of auxiliaries, while actions are rendedred by means of nouns, as it is done in the Turkish language. As I said, the consequence is that Basic English is defaced and impoverished as a language. English is degraded, it is pushed back to the stage of a primitive, limited vocabulary, and besides, those words have been chosen according to a principle that clearly contradicts the

fost menţinute nu e făcută pe linia justă a dezvoltării limbilor moderne, ci împotriva acestei linii. Se înţelege că dacă cineva se constrînge la folosirea acestui vocabular limitat şi prost ales, el nu va fi în stare să exprime nici o idee cît de cît mai adîncă.

progress of all modern languages. We are bound to infer, then, that whoever restricts his ability to communicate to this small, badly chosen list, will hardly ever manage to convey any significant ideas at all.

(*Fondul principal al limbii române*. Editura Ştiinţifică. Bucureşti. 1957. pp 110-111.)

Alexandru Graur (1900-1988) has been Professor of General and Theoretical Linguistics at the University of Bucharest (1946-1970), member of the Academy of the Romanian Socialist Republic (1948-1988), and director of „Editura Academiei", the publishing house of the Romanian Academy (1955-1974). He has been the most outstanding Marxist-oriented linguist of Romania. He got his degree from École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris in **1929**, and his PhD at the Sorbonne, with a thesis about Indo-European linguistics.

"When I was working as editor and reporter of the Romanian Broadcasting Corporation, I was asked to interview Alexandru Graur. The expected a long interview. Graur received me in his office: he was Head of *Editura Academiei* at the time. He had absolutely no English. The interview, on the other hand, was meant to be listened to by the English-speaking world, so it had to be in English by all means. I transcribed his text — which I had translated into English myself — using the International Phonetic Alphabet. We practised for a few hours. This is how Alexandru Graur gave his one and only interview in English." **C. George Sandulescu**

If we spoke a different language,

we would perceive a somewhat different world.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

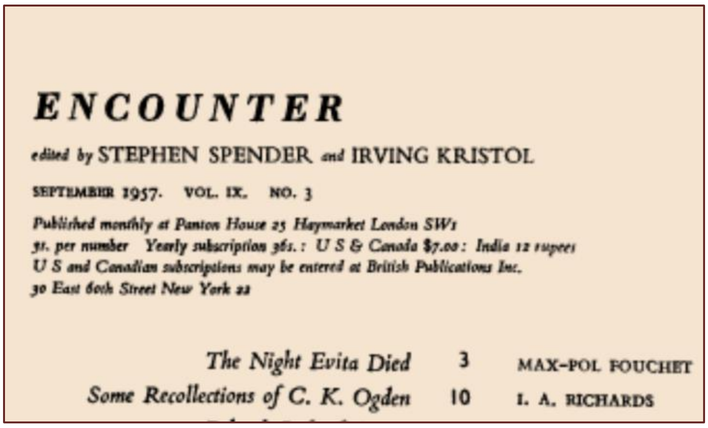
Charles K. Ogden: *Basic English*

15



I. A. Richards

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I. A. Richards

Some Recollections of C. K. Ogden.

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Charles Kay Ogden first appeared to me at a lunch in Magdalene to which my Director of Studies, F. R. Saler, had asked me as a freshman in trouble: I had found myself, after a term or so of history, possessed by some heartfelt objection to reading any more of it and was begging to be allowed to try something else. The other guest was a small commanding undergraduate also of Magdalene with a large pale head and disconcerting glasses. He was some three years older than myself and ready to discourse all through the afternoon out of preternatural knowledge, and in a beautiful and tireless voice, on The Choice of Subject. Our host left us early to play tennis, and I listened on and on to what the leading lecturers in almost every field would soon be telling me if I did not take due care. "Will you change your mind, if I convince you?" used to be one of Ogden's openings. I suppose I was convinced. (Later we came to count together the number of convictions in a philosopher's record.) At least, I let him lead me off to his attic in the Pepys Building and provide me with books which could, he said, ease a beginner's steps into Moral Science. I still feel at times that I would have done well to have read them.

"Ogden, what do you do with all these books? Do you read them?" This was the searching question put by the Master, S. A. Donaldson, as he threaded his way through the accumulations in that attic. The strange thing is that a just answer could have been: "On the whole, yes!" If you looked closely you would find that many of them held many slips of paper with annotations and that in the margins were Ogden's peculiar, minutely pencilled indications. He had a clairvoyant's knack of opening any book at the page most relevant to one of his polymathic purposes. But this I only learnt after my next serious meeting with him, over six years later.

That meeting can be dated to a minute. At noon on 11th November, 1918, an excited Frenchman leapt off his cycle in Kings Parade and cried: "They told me the War was over! But look!" A grand piano came crashing out through the plate glass window of Ogden's Cambridge Magazine Book Shop and Art Gallery. As we watched, another followed. Medical students, flown with the spirits of the occasion, were smashing it up. This looked, and was, rather dangerous; but there was Ogden standing in the next doorway calmly watching the assailants. He was chewing his lips a little and pressing the corner of his eye with his finger-tips —a trick he had for improving the acuity of his vision. I joined him, though I was largely in the dark, along with most other people, as to what was happening.

At that time I rented a room from him above one of his shops, at 1 Free School

Lane, and knew him only remotely as my landlord. About midnight, he came in to ask whether I could identify any of the rioters, if need be, to help him with his action for damages against the town, and told me the story. He had founded his *Cambridge Magazine*, a penny University Weekly, astonishingly successful from the start, against all advice. But there was in him — behind all his freaks and humours — a central clarifying insistence, a flame of curiosity and impatience, a disdain for the acquiescences of sloth, a trust in mind which, even as an undergraduate, made him one of the forces of his time. That was why, with none of the traditional advantages, he had nearly all the great — from Hardy round to Shaw — generously ready to write for him. It was most encouraging. But when he proposed to go on from journalism into the book business, he had been warned that he must give up, if so, all academic ambitions. With the War the *Cambridge Magazine* had developed a review of the foreign press and soared up to a circulation of some 25,000. It was invaluable to the Foreign Office, and to would-be informed opinion, but naturally became, of course, a target for the Blimps of those days who did their best to shoot it down with paper-rationing. Hence, the multiple *Cambridge Magazine* Book Shops to provide sorting space in which Ogden could skim the cream from bulk purchases of pulp-worthy books. He would sort books for hours — from 1.00 a.m. on — after his day's work. Overheard from the foot of a ladder during one such sorting session: "It's long since I perused a volume. Must stop this soon! Must stop this soon!" Over the rest of his paper-supply measures, mystery had to hang.

To all this and to all Ogden's current hopes and endeavours the day's doings had been the death-blow. He knew it; though why the blow had fallen was not at all clear. Ogden's style of comment could be free and stinging. How tell an opponent he doesn't know what he is talking about? Why not in verse?

The rise of Adam's Apple,
You fallen son of Eve,
Enables you to grapple
With things you can't conceive.

How report an inquest? "The Coroner found that the customers were not poisoned by Hawkins but by some fish." Too much of this sort of thing could lead to resentments which combined easily with impatience over discussion of War Aims.

After collecting my useless impressions of the rioters, Ogden started off for "Top Hole", his fantastically cluttered attic above MacFisheries in Petty Cury.

Half-way down the tightly twisting stairs, under an aged gas jet, he stopped to make some remark upon a recent controversy in *Mind*. An hour or two later when we went downstairs, the main outline of *The Meaning of Meaning* was clear enough, and plans for the joint Work to embody it were in being.

The remark is attributed to Robert Hutchings: "When someone hands you a lemon, see if you can't make some lemonade." Acting in this spirit, Ogden, within a few weeks, had transformed his defunct *Cambridge Magazine* (it had thousands of subscribers to be taken care of) into a handsome Quarterly, its double columns so laid out that one page would hold type for four pages of our future Work. We wrote its first draft as a series of articles under various names, using for more experimental or frivolous passages Ogden's famous pseudonym "Adelyne More" (Add a Line More: I spell this out because I have met so many who claimed to be the only one or the first, to "detect the imposture." Ogden, it is true, took considerable pains to substantiate the fictive authoress of his *Fecundity versus Civilisation* with photos of a pretty secretary and of her military wedding: an arch of swords at the church door; I believe I dissuaded him from announcing triplets).

Work on the projected Work went in intermittently for some years, Ogden meanwhile becoming more and more centred in London, where he was organising his two great series: The International Library of Psychology, Philosophy, and Scientific Method and The History of Civilisation. To both he acted as General Editor. I have sometimes thought that the first of these may have been in part invented to serve as a reassuring frame for the unconventionalities of the *Meaning of Meaning*. Some of the most distinctive parts were earlier pieces that Ogden had had lying by him unfinished: one such was the "Word Magic" essay which appeared in fuller and more striking form in the *Cambridge Magazine* and had to be cut down for the book (with an apologetic promise of an independent volume-never, alas, to be written). Another was the terminal fable: "Realise thyself, Amoeba dear, said Will..." As little by little we learned to understand (and write) one another's language, the book advanced. Much of it had to be written in the small hours after Ogden's arrival by the last train from London, and without cocoa I hardly think much would have resulted. He held the pen, on the ground that his hand was more legible to his typist than mine. And he sat while I walked up and down.

There were incessant interruptions: translation work in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* (without Ogden's energy and his enlistment of the young Frank Ramsay's talent there might well never have been any English version), on Vaihinger's *Als Ob*, on Jules Romain's *Eyeless Sight*, and scores of others. There was an opinion on the

purchase of Stonehenge (Ogden could not easily believe that he could not find a very good use for it). There was the wind to raise by various means ever and again. In those days, Ogden suffered frequently from what he described as "hand-to-mouth disease"—what struck me was that his mouthfuls had to be somewhat large. One welcome interlude arose through a chance summer juncture with James Wood in Cambridge and produced *Foundations of Aesthetics* — much aided by an ozone machine whose sparks, Ogden averred, generated Brighton air in the Fens. Certainly at about 3.00 a.m., while Ogden, pen in hand, enacted the death of Sardanapalus on a vast, high day-bed and Wood dis his Muller's exercises, the reel of seaweed (or Underground?) it emitted seemed to freshen up the argument.

The chapter on Definition in the "Beadig of Beadig", as we came to call it in memory of a frustrating cold in the head, led us into long discussions of the number of radically different ways there may be of telling anyone what any word may mean. This inquiry was the germ of Basic English. Ogden had long been deep in the history and theory of universal languages, and it was no long step from our account of Definition to the notion of a minimal English capable of serving all purposes. We played with the construction of this for a little — I recall the excitement of the initial moves. But we decided that it would distract us and delay the completion of the Work. It was Ogden who was to be singly and wholly responsible for the devising in detail of Basic English with the invaluable aid, through years, of Miss L. W. Lockhart, author of *Word Economy*. His Word List and its Rules shrank and expanded for a while, like an accordion as his resourceful, prehensive, and reconciling intelligence explored one set of possibilities after another.

This preliminary work and the tedium of the actual devising in part explain the tenacity with which Ogden, after the promulgation of Basic English, resisted proposals for further development. But there were more practical reasons: he had to have a fixed and finished system once he had decided to promote it. Another man might have published a series of papers or a general treatise on the simplification of English; but Ogden had the ambition to found and direct a Movement and I had curtailed this for the concerns of the *Meaning of Meaning*.

In the final crystallisation of Basic English, Ogden's Magdalene By-fellowship played a decisive part. His countless commitments, of which no one but Ogden ever knew more than a fringe, kept him in London. But the By-fellowship gave both a little respite from stress and the incentive to come out with something distinctive and substantial in return. Whatever the long-time verdicts may be, this at least can be said: with Basic English Ogden brought a sparkling stream of fresh thought into stables

which have for thousands of years very badly needed cleansing. And he took important steps towards making techniques in language instruction join the general accumulative advance in design characteristic of our times. But this is of his work. In his life he was gay, tireless as Socrates, sympathetic, imaginative, and quick in help, if salt and astringent in comment and wary in counsel.

(*Encounter*, September 1957, pp. 10-12.)



HAMLET:

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow
of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath
borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how
abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rims at
it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know
not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your
gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment,
that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one
now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen?

C. K. Ogden

Basic English

A few extracts.

Contemporary Literature Press

http://editura.mttlc.ro

Bucureşti 2013

British

American

Scientific

International

Commercial

BABEL
(*in Basic*)

Now the earth has only one language, and the number of its words was small. . . . .

And the Lord said, See, the people is one, and they have all one language, and they are doing this: and now everything which they have in mind to do will be possible for them.

Come, let us go down, and get the words of their language mixed up, so that no one may have knowledge of what the other is saying.

So the Lord sent them away into every part of the earth, and their building was stopped.

For this reason it was named Babel, because there the Lord got the language of all the earth mixed up: and from there the Lord sent them away into every part of the earth.

Genesis XI, 1-9.

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Second Printing, 1932
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Fourth Printing, 1933
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PREFACE

The following account of Basic English is designed to give a general idea of the system and its applications.

A graded introduction, written in Basic English, is provided in the *ABC*; and in *Basic Step by Step* for foreign learners. Translations of these two books are now available in French, Spanish, Italian, German, and other languages, and on them will be based the further teaching material required. All particulars of the senses and uses of the 850 Basic words will be found in *The Basic Words*, where the fuller details relating to derivatives and idiom given in the *ABC* are listed under the separate entries. For those who desire to go forward to any form of Wider English, *The General Basic English Dictionary* provides Basic Definitions of more than 40,000 senses of over 20,000 words, so that anyone with a good knowledge of Basic can teach himself to read an English newspaper without much difficulty.

The case for Basic English as the Universal Language of Radio, the Talkies, Commerce, and Science is presented in *Debabelization* and *Basic English versus the Artificial Languages*; while for lighter reading, the Basic version of Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* may be specially mentioned.

Finally, in addition to a complete series of graded text-books, a wide selection of examples (stories, news, letters, and dialogues) in Basic has been provided. A list of these and other publications will be found at the end of the volume.

The present outline is divided into two Parts :—

I. A general exposition giving a brief summary of the system, and of the purposes for which it was designed.

II. A Short Guide, in Basic English, from a somewhat different angle, which will also serve as an example of Basic itself.

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45, Gordon Square,
London, W.C.1.

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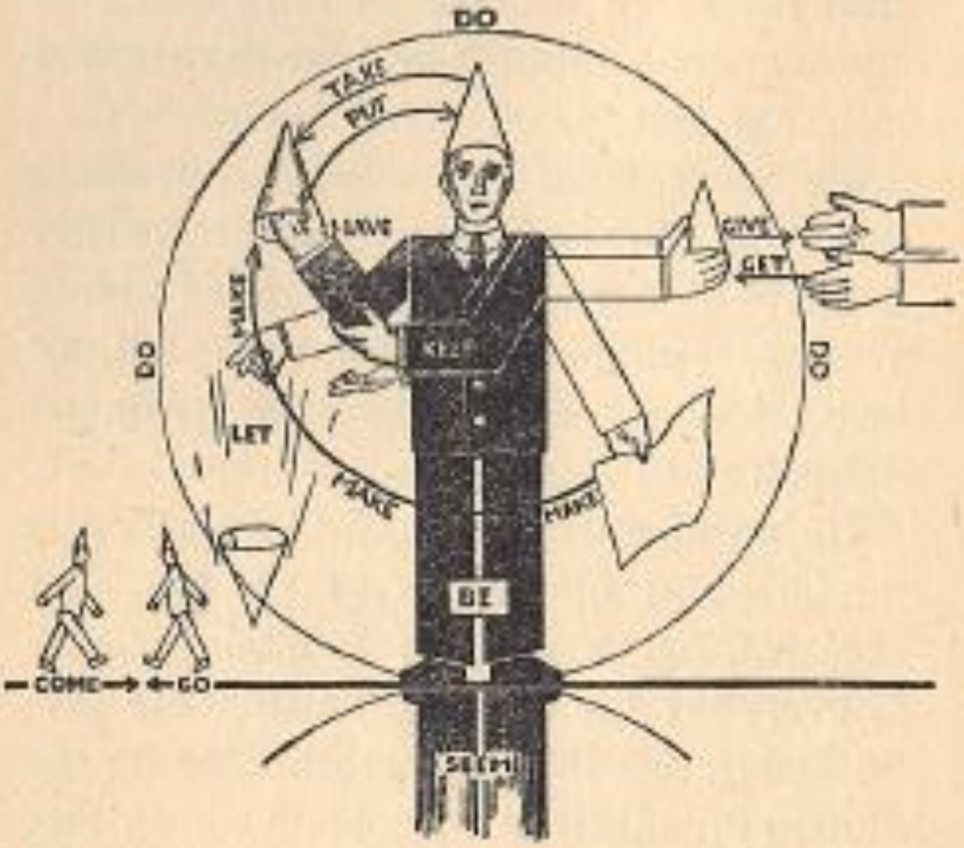
PART I

PART II

APPENDIX

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OPERATIONS



MAKE the paper into a hat.
HAVE the hat.
PUT the hat on the head.
TAKE the hat from the head.
KEEP the hat here.
LET the hat go.

GIVE the hat to someone.
GET the hat from someone.
GO from this place.
COME to this place.
BE doing.
SEEM to be (doing).

DO any act.

In due time, the Child of Tomorrow will gradually absorb Basic by an ideal technique in four stages beginning in the cradle with phonetic exercises not directly related to the symbolic side of the vocabulary; followed by the alphabet[1] and the simpler words at the age of significant speech; a first attempt on the vocabulary as a whole; and finally, at the school-leaving age, a few weeks of intensive study to consolidate the system.

[1] See *From Pictures to Letters* (1937), by Ellen Walpole.

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1. WHAT IS BASIC ENGLISH?

Basic English is an attempt to give to everyone a second, or international, language which will take as little of the learner's time as possible.

It is a system in which everything may be said for all the purposes of everyday existence: the common interests of men and women, general talk, news, trade, and science.

Of the 850 Basic words, it will be seen that 600 are names of things, and 150 are names of qualities. That makes 750, and the last 100 are the words which put the others into operation and make them do their work in statements. After the names of acts and directions which, as we have seen, are pointers, come the other Basic words which make the language complete. All of these (62) are clearly taking the place of other words which would say the same thing in a more round-about way, or are of use in oiling the wheels of our talk so that it may not seem strange to persons who are used to normal English.

6. THE TEACHING OF BASIC

The learning of Basic in schools is only one part, though a very important one, of the process by which a knowledge of its value may become general in all countries. Radio and the talking pictures will do much but the schools have a better chance because they have more time.

Ogden's English Vocabulary Word List

A

a, able, about, account, acid, across, act, addition, adjustment, advertisement, after, again, against, agreement, air, all, almost, among, amount, amusement, and, angle, angry, animal, answer, ant, any, apparatus, apple, approval, arch, argument, arm, army, art, as, at, attack, attempt, attention, attraction, authority, automatic, awake.

B

baby, back, bad, bag, balance, ball, band, base, basin, basket, bath, be, beautiful, because, bed, bee, before, behavior, belief, bell, bent, berry, between, bird, birth, bit, bite, bitter, black, blade, blood, blow, blue, board, boat, body, boiling, bone, book, boot, bottle, box, boy, brain, brake, branch, brass, bread, breath, brick, bridge, bright, broken, brother, brown, brush, bucket, building, bulb, burn, burst, business, but, butter, button, by.

C

cake, camera, canvas, card, care, carriage, cart, cat, cause, certain, chain, chalk, chance, change, cheap, cheese, chemical, chest, chief, chin, church, circle, clean, clear, clock, cloth, cloud, coal, coat, cold, collar, color, comb, come, comfort, committee, common, company, comparison, complete, competition, complex, condition, connection, conscious, control, cook, copper, copy, cord, cork, cotton, cough, country, cover, cow, crack, credit, crime, cruel, crush, cry, cup, current, curtain, curve, cushion, cut.

D

damage, danger, dark, daughter, day, dead, dear, death, debt, decision, deep, degree, delicate, dependent, design, desire, destruction, detail, development, different, digestion, direction, dirty, discovery, discussion, disease, disgust, distance, distribution, division, do, dog, door, doubt, down, drain, drawer, dress, drink, driving, drop, dry, dust.

E

ear, early, earth, east, edge, education, effect, egg, elastic, electric, end, engine, enough, equal, error, even, event, ever, every, example, exchange, existence, expansion, experience, expert, eye.

F

face, fact, fall, false, family, far, farm, fat, father, fear, feather, feeble, feeling, female, fertile, fiction, field, fight, finger, fire, first, fish, fixed, flag, flame, flat, flight, floor, flower, fly, fold, food, foolish, foot, for, force, fork, form, forward, fowl, frame, free, frequent, friend, from, front, fruit, full, future.

G

garden, general, get, girl, give, glass, glove, go, goat, gold, good, government, grain, grass, great, green, grey/gray, grip, group, growth, guide, gun.

H

hair, hammer, hand, hanging, happy, harbor, hard, harmony, hat, hate, have, he, head, healthy, hearing, heart, heat, help, here, high, history, hole, hollow, hook, hope, horn, horse, hospital, hour, house, how, humor.

I

I, ice, idea, if, ill, important, impulse, in, increase, industry, ink, insect, instrument, insurance, interest, invention, iron, island.

J

jelly, jewel, join, journey, judge, jump.

K

keep, kettle, key, kick, kind, kiss, knee, knife, knot, knowledge.

L

land, language, last, late, laugh, law, lead, leaf, learning, leather, left, leg, let, letter, level, library, lift, light, like, limit, line, linen, lip, liquid, list, little (less,least), living, lock, long, loose, loss, loud, love, low.

M

machine, make, male, man, manager, map, mark, market, married, match, material, mass, may, meal, measure, meat, medical, meeting, memory, metal, middle, military, milk, mind, mine, minute, mist, mixed, money, monkey, month, moon, morning, mother, motion, mountain, mouth, move, much (more, most), muscle, music.

N

nail, name, narrow, nation, natural, near, necessary, neck, need, needle, nerve, net, new, news, night, no, noise, normal, north, nose, not, note, now, number, nut.

O

observation, of, off, offer, office, oil, old, on, only, open, operation, opinion, opposite, or, orange, order, organization, ornament, other, out, oven, over, owner.

P

page, pain, paint, paper, parallel, parcel, part, past, paste, payment, peace, pen, pencil, person, physical, picture, pig, pin, pipe, place, plane, plant, plate, play, please, pleasure, plough/plow, pocket, point, poison, polish, political, poor, porter, position, possible, pot, potato, powder, power, present, price, print, prison, private, probable, process, produce, profit, property, prose, protest, public, pull, pump, punishment, purpose, push, put.

Q

quality, question, quick, quiet, quite.

R

rail, rain, range, rat, rate, ray, reaction, red, reading, ready, reason, receipt, record, regret, regular, relation, religion, representative, request, respect, responsible, rest, reward, rhythm, rice, right, ring, river, road, rod, roll, roof, room, root, rough, round, rub, rule, run.

S

sad, safe, sail, salt, same, sand, say, scale, school, science, scissors, screw, sea, seat, second, secret, secretary, see, seed, selection, self, send, seem, sense, separate, serious, servant, sex, shade, shake, shame, sharp, sheep, shelf, ship, shirt, shock, shoe, short, shut, side, sign, silk, silver, simple, sister, size, skin, skirt, sky, sleep, slip, slope, slow, small, smash, smell, smile, smoke, smooth, snake, sneeze, snow, so, soap, society, sock, soft, solid, some, son, song, sort, sound, south, soup, space, spade, special, sponge, spoon, spring, square, stamp, stage, star, start, statement, station, steam, stem, steel, step, stick, sticky, still, stitch, stocking, stomach, stone, stop, store, story, strange, street, stretch, stiff,

straight, strong, structure, substance, sugar, suggestion, summer, support, surprise, such, sudden, sun, sweet, swim, system.

T

table, tail, take, talk, tall, taste, tax, teaching, tendency, test, than, that, the, then, theory, there, thick, thin, thing, this, though, thought, thread, throat, through, thumb, thunder, ticket, tight, till, time, tin, tired, to, toe, together, tomorrow, tongue, tooth, top, touch, town, trade, train, transport, tray, tree, trick, trouble, trousers, true, turn, twist.

U

umbrella, under, unit, up, use.

V

value, verse, very, vessel, view, violent, voice.

W

waiting, walk, wall, war, warm, wash, waste, watch, water, wave, wax, way, weather, week, weight, well, west, wet, wheel, when, where, while, whip, whistle, white, who, why, wide, will, wind, window, wine, wing, winter, wire, wise, with, woman, wood, wool, word, work, worm, wound, writing, wrong.

X, Y, Z

year, yellow, yes, yesterday, you, young.

Ogden's Word List—in His Order

OPERATIONS - 100 words

come, get, give, go, keep, let, make, put, seem, take, be, do, have, say, see, send, may, will, about, across, after, against, among, at, before, between, by, down, from, in, off, on, over, through, to, under, up, with,
as, for, of, till, than,
a , the, all, any, every, little, much, no, other, some, such, that, this, I , he, you, who,
and, because, but, or, if, though, while, how, when, where, why,
again, ever, far, forward, here, near, now, out, still, then, there, together, well,
almost, enough, even, not, only, quite, so, very, tomorrow, yesterday,
north, south, east, west, please, yes.

THINGS - 400 General words

account, act, addition, adjustment, advertisement, agreement, air, amount, amusement, animal, answer, apparatus, approval, argument, art, attack, attempt, attention, attraction, authority, back, balance, base, behavior, belief, birth, bit, bite, blood, blow, body, brass, bread, breath, brother, building, burn, burst, business, butter, canvas, care, cause, chalk, chance, change, cloth, coal, color, comfort, committee, company, comparison, competition, condition, connection, control, cook, copper, copy, cork, cotton, cough, country, cover, crack, credit, crime, crush, cry ,current, curve, damage, danger, daughter, day, death, debt, decision, degree, design, desire, destruction, detail, development, digestion, direction, discovery, discussion, disease, disgust, distance, distribution, division, doubt, drink, driving, dust, earth, edge, education, effect, end, error, event, example, exchange, existence, expansion, experience, expert, fact, fall, family, father, fear, feeling, fiction, field, fight, fire, flame, flight, flower, fold, food, force, form, friend, front, fruit, glass, gold, government, grain, grass, grip, group, growth, guide, harbor, harmony, hate, hearing, heat, help, history, hole, hope, hour, humor, ice, idea, impulse, increase, industry, ink, insect, instrument, insurance, interest, invention, iron, jelly, join,

journey, judge, jump, kick, kiss, knowledge, land, language, laugh, law, lead, learning, leather, letter, level, lift, light, limit, linen, liquid, list, look, loss, love, machine, man, manager, mark, market, mass, meal, measure, meat, meeting, memory, metal, middle, milk, mind, mine, minute, mist, money, month, morning ,mother, motion, mountain, move, music, name, nation, need, news, night, noise, note, number, observation, offer, oil, operation, opinion, order, organization, ornament, owner, page, pain, paint, paper, part, paste, payment, peace, person, place, plant, play, pleasure, point, poison, polish, porter, position, powder, power, price, print, process, produce, profit, property, prose, protest, pull, punishment, purpose, push, quality, question, rain, range, rate, ray, reaction, reading, reason, record, regret, relation, religion, representative, request, respect, rest, reward, rhythm, rice, river, road, roll, room, rub, rule, run, salt, sand, scale, science, sea, seat, secretary, selection, self, sense, servant, sex, shade, shake, shame, shock, side, sign, silk, silver, sister, size, sky, sleep, slip, slope, smash, smell, smile, smoke, sneeze, snow, soap, society, son, song, sort, sound, soup, space, stage, start, statement, steam, steel, step, stitch, stone, stop, story, stretch, structure, substance, sugar, suggestion, summer, support, surprise, swim, system, talk, taste, tax, teaching, tendency, test, theory, thing, thought, thunder, time, tin, top, touch, trade, transport, trick, trouble, turn, twist, unit, use, value, verse, vessel, view, voice, walk, war, wash, waste, water, wave, wax, way, weather, week, weight, wind, wine, winter, woman, wood, wool, word, work, wound, writing , year.

THINGS - 200 Picturable words

angle, ant, apple, arch, arm, army, baby, bag, ball, band, basin, basket, bath, bed, bee, bell, berry, bird, blade, board, boat, bone, book, boot, bottle, box, boy, brain, brake, branch, brick, bridge, brush, bucket, bulb, button, cake, camera, card, cart, carriage, cat, chain, cheese, chest, chin, church, circle, clock, cloud, coat, collar, comb, cord, cow, cup, curtain, cushion, dog, door, drain, drawer, dress, drop, ear, egg, engine, eye, face, farm, feather, finger, fish, flag, floor, fly, foot, fork, fowl, frame, garden, girl, glove, goat, gun, hair, hammer, hand, hat, head, heart, hook, horn, horse, hospital, house, island, jewel, kettle, key, knee, knife, knot, leaf, leg, library, line, lip, lock, map, match, monkey, moon, mouth, muscle, nail, neck, needle, nerve, net, nose, nut, office, orange, oven, parcel, pen, pencil, picture, pig, pin, pipe, plane, plate, plough/plow, pocket, pot, potato, prison, pump, rail, rat, receipt, ring, rod, roof, root, sail, school, scissors, screw, seed, sheep, shelf, ship, shirt, shoe, skin, skirt,

snake, sock, spade, sponge, spoon, spring, square, stamp, star, station, stem, stick, stocking, stomach, store, street, sun, table, tail, thread, throat, thumb, ticket, toe, tongue, tooth, town, train, tray, tree, trousers, umbrella, wall, watch, wheel, whip, whistle, window, wing, wire, worm.

QUALITIES - 100 General

able, acid, angry, automatic, beautiful, black, boiling, bright, broken, brown, cheap, chemical, chief, clean, clear, common, complex, conscious, cut, deep, dependent, early, elastic, electric, equal, fat, fertile, first, fixed, flat, free, frequent, full, general, good, great, grey/gray, hanging, happy, hard, healthy, high, hollow, important, kind, like, living, long, male, married, material, medical, military, natural, necessary, new, normal, open, parallel, past, physical, political, poor, possible, present, private, probable, quick, quiet, ready, red, regular, responsible, right, round, same, second, separate, serious, sharp, smooth, sticky, stiff, straight, strong, sudden, sweet, tall, thick, tight, tired, true, violent, waiting, warm, wet, wide, wise, yellow, young.

QUALITIES - 50 Opposites

awake, bad, bent, bitter, blue, certain, cold, complete, cruel, dark, dead, dear, delicate, different, dirty, dry, false, feeble, female, foolish, future, green, ill, last, late, left, loose, loud, low, mixed, narrow, old, opposite, public, rough, sad, safe, secret, short, shut, simple, slow, small, soft, solid, special, strange, thin, white, wrong.

We have so far published in this James Joyce Lexicography Series:

Part One

Volume:	Title:	Number of Pages:	Launched on:
Vol. **1.**	The **Romanian** Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*. http://editura.mttlc.ro/sandulescu.lexicon-of-romanian-in-FW.html	455pp	11 November 2011
Vol. **2.**	Helmut Bonheim's **German** Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*. http://editura.mttlc.ro/Helmut.Bonheim-Lexicon-of-the-German-in-FW.html	217pp	7 December 2011
Vol. **3.**	A Lexicon of **Common Scandinavian** in *Finnegans Wake*. http://editura.mttlc.ro/C-G.Sandulescu-A-Lexicon-of-Common-Scandinavian-in-FW.html	195pp	13 January 2012
Vol. **4.**	A Lexicon of **Allusions and Motifs** in *Finnegans Wake*. http://editura.mttlc.ro/G.Sandulescu-Lexicon-of-Allusions-and-Motifs-in-FW.html	263pp	11 February 2012
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	Hundred Pages. Pages 003 to 103. **Dedicated to Clive Hart.** http://editura.mttlc.ro/sandulescu-unenglish-fw-volume-one.html		
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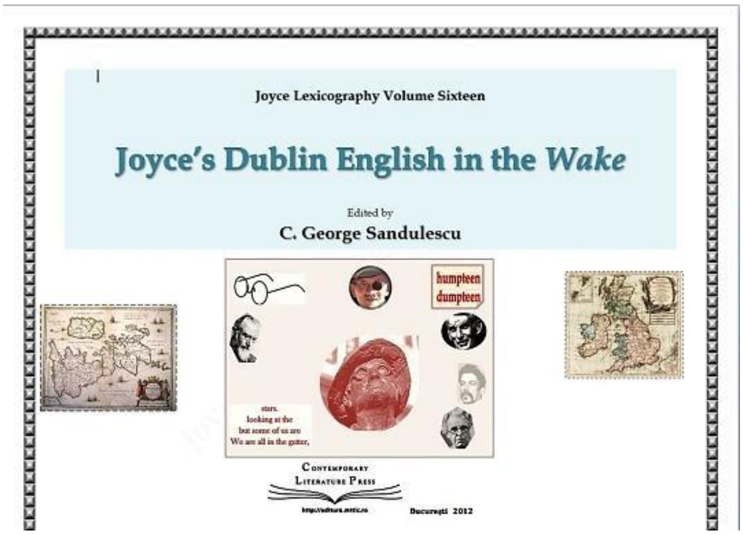
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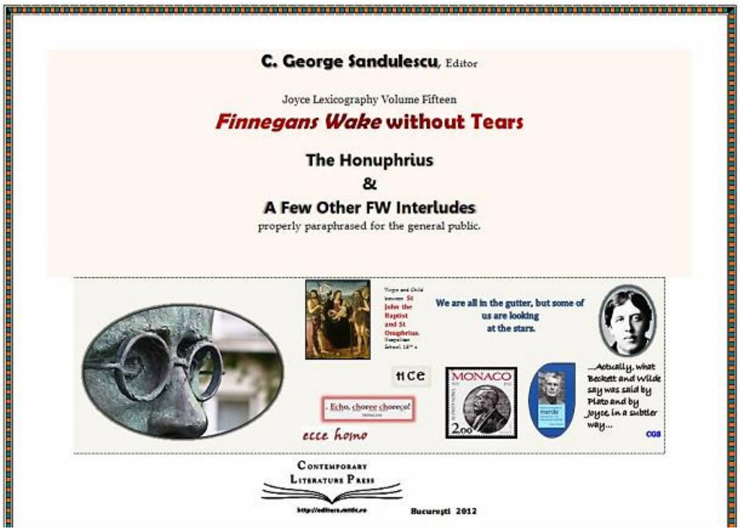
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